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TIPS

for SUPERVISORS

On Personnel Management

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from the Director of Personnel

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Misc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
WASHINGTON

March 1963

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

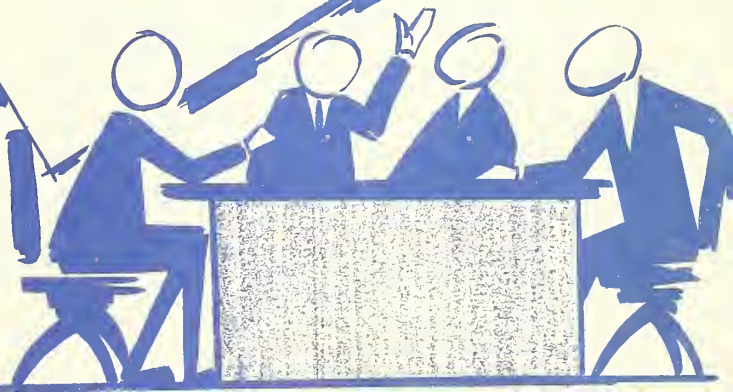
NOTE TO SUPERVISORS:

We who work in USDA have banded together in a variety of employee organizations: welfare associations, cooperative buying groups, social and fraternal clubs, credit unions, etc. One very important type of organization is the employee union or the professional association which has as a primary concern the terms of employment and working conditions of its members. About a third of us who are regular employees of USDA and of the ASCS County Committees--some 32,000 in all--are represented by such organizations.

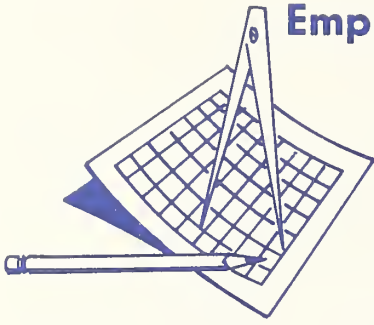
Employee unions and professional associations of this type have been active in the Federal Service, including USDA, for many years. Last year--on January 17, 1962--the President issued Executive Order 10988 entitled Employee-Management Cooperation in the Federal Service. This Order states the general policies that govern the working relations between management and employee organizations in the Federal Service. The President's policies have been further implemented in USDA by Department and Agency instructions.

It is the purpose of this "Tips" to give you, the supervisor, the information you need in carrying out your responsibilities in the program of Employee-Management Cooperation. You have an important role to play. We hope this will help you play it well.

Carl B. Barnes
Carl B. Barnes
Director of Personnel

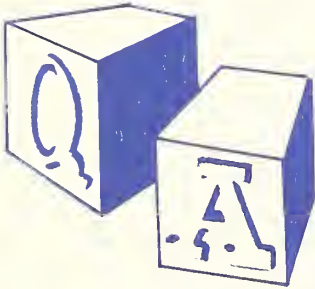
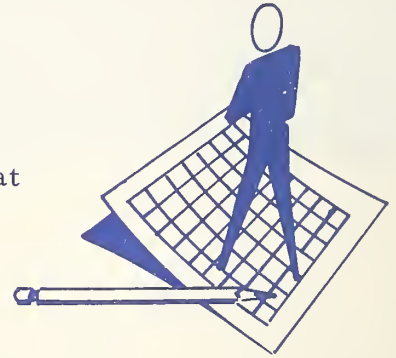


Employee-Management Cooperation In USDA

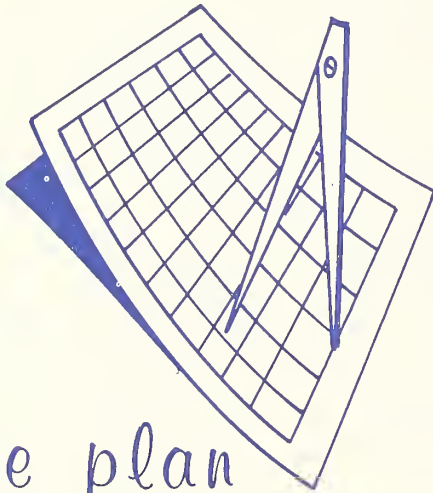


Let's first sketch the plan for employee-management cooperation in USDA.

Then let's consider how you as a supervisor fit into that plan.



And finally, let us answer some of the more common questions that may be put to you by employees and others.



the plan

Our plan is based upon Executive Order 10988. Responsibility for implementing the policies in the Order is placed upon the head of each executive department. The Civil Service Commission and the Labor Department provide certain staff services. The day after the Order was issued,

Secretary Freeman initiated its implementation in USDA. His memorandum to Agency Heads contained the following paragraph:

"Employees have an obvious and proper interest in the terms of their employment and the conditions under which they work. Through their organizations they may contribute substantially to the formulation, improvement, and orderly administration of these matters which so vitally affect them. It is our firm intention and policy to cooperate with the representatives of employee organizations with the goal in mind of making the Department a model employer and providing the conditions under which each employee will strive to be a conscientious and efficient public servant."

That paragraph sets the objectives of our plan. It sets the tone and attitude for its administration.

The plan covers those employee organizations that are concerned with the terms of employment and working conditions of their members. They must meet certain conditions of eligibility, one of which is that they do not assert the right to strike against the Government of the United States. An organization that desires recognition applies in writing, giving certain information. Two especially important points involved are (1) the unit or group of employees to be represented and (2) the degree of recognition sought.

Representation units are set up along craft, profession, or other occupational line; or along office, division, area or other organization line; or some combination of occupational and organizational lines. The two main considerations are: (1) the degree of community of interest among employees in the unit and (2) whether the unit is practicable from an administrative standpoint. Management makes the final decision in defining the unit, within the policies of the Executive Order. In case of exclusive recognition, a unit may not be set up which includes (1) executives, (2) personnel workers, (3) both supervisors and employees supervised, or (4) both professional and nonprofessional employees, unless a majority of the professionals vote to be included.

There are three possible degrees of recognition: (1) Informal, (2) Formal, or (3) Exclusive. A minimum of 16 members or 10 percent of the employees in the unit, whichever is

greater, is required for formal recognition. Majority support is required for exclusive. No special number or percentage is required for informal.

Regardless of the degree of recognition, an employee organization has a right to present its views to management on matters of concern to its members. This is an extension of the right of any government employee to be heard. Normally, such views are put in writing. This right of an organization to present its views imposes on management the obligation to give bona fide consideration to such views.



"I'm afraid we don't have a set-up for handling such a complaint, Miss Finch! . . . You say you were pinched while filing a grievance with the grievance committee?"

Courtesy George Lichty, Field Enterprises, Inc.,
Sun-Times and *Daily News Syndicate*.

In case of informal recognition the matter usually stops there. Management is under no obligation to solicit the views of the organization. It is obliged to give a proper hearing when asked.

In case of formal recognition, the organization not only has the right to be heard, management is obliged to consult with it from time to time in

formulating and implementing personnel policies and practices and about working conditions of concern to its members.

In case of exclusive recognition, the organization represents all employees in the unit, members and non-members alike. There is a written agreement with management. Representatives of the organization and of management consult and negotiate on personnel policies, practices, and working conditions of concern to all employees in the unit.

There is more to the plan than this, but these are the essentials. As a supervisor, you are not likely to be involved in defining a representation unit, extending recognition, or conducting negotiations. These things may be going on around you, however, and it is well for you to know what it is about.



the supervisor

Then what is your part as a supervisor in the program?

Possibly we can get a useful clue by looking again at the heading on page 2: "Employee-Management Cooperation in USDA." Note the hyphen between "Employee" and "Management." Perhaps that hyphen symbolizes your

role. I am sure you know what it feels like to be in the middle. But, like the mortar between bricks, it is your job to keep them* together, not apart. If they do come apart at times, you are supposed to stick with management. You are an integral part of management.



"I think they're trying to build up suspense! . . . They walk in, look unhappy, and walk out without making any wage demands!"

Courtesy George Lichty, and Field Enterprises, Inc.

In carrying out the mission of your organization, top management and staff assistants define the objectives, plan and schedule the work, allot resources to its accomplishment, and check up on results.

Employees do the individual tasks involved in executing the work plan.

As a supervisor, you see that the plans of management are carried out, in the manner prescribed and on schedule. You are the last stage of management, the point where its plans and decisions impinge upon the individual worker. From the point of view of the worker, you are the first stage of management.

Some of the problems you encounter will be those of individuals. Others may be those of several employees,

*Employees and management, that is, not bricks.

or of your whole group. As a supervisor you have a certain amount of authority and some discretion in its use. To the extent that the situation is within your control, therefore, you should correct the "something" that is causing trouble. To the extent that it is not within your control, you should call for help or pass the problem on to those higher in the organization. If the employees have a legitimate gripe, let them know you are doing what you can. If they don't have a legitimate gripe, try to set them straight in their thinking. If it is something beyond control within the organization, explain it to them and try to get them to accept the inevitable. Keep in mind that the problems we are talking about here, whether of individuals or of groups, are those arising from the terms and conditions of employment.

Now what does all this have to do with unions? Possibly nothing. This is just a part of good supervisory practice. It helps get the work done smoothly and well. That is what we are here for. If your employees are organized, it will be much easier to do business with them in this way. If they are not organized, you should not make it necessary for them to do so in order to get equitable treatment. That is just good management.

The Executive Order and Department policy assure employees certain rights in this area. Here they are:

(1) It is a matter for decision by each employee whether he joins or refrains from joining an employee organization. His right freely to make this decision shall be respected.

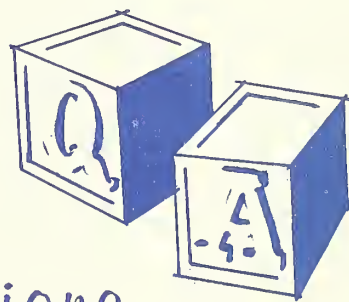
(2) An employee's status as a

member or nonmember of an employee organization shall not be given any weight in official actions affecting him.

(3) Each employee is free to assist and actively participate in the affairs of an employee organization, provided no conflict of interest is involved and the activity is otherwise proper.

(4) Each employee, regardless of organization membership, is free to bring matters of personal concern to the attention of officials in accordance with governing rules and policies. Likewise, he is free to choose his own representative in a grievance or appeal action.

It is your responsibility as a supervisor to help guard these individual rights. Other matters in this field of employee-management relations may come up. Some of the most likely problems are covered in the next section in the form of questions and answers.



questions and answers

1. Q: Why all the fuss about unions? To the best of my knowledge there isn't a single union member in the office where I work.

A: Membership is very unevenly distributed in the Department, also in the Government as a whole. The statement on page 8 gives you information about the employee organizations active in USDA and their membership. It doesn't tell you where the members are located, though. Even if they are not in your office, you will probably meet them sooner or later. You should have a general knowledge of the program, anyway. Employees will ask you questions.

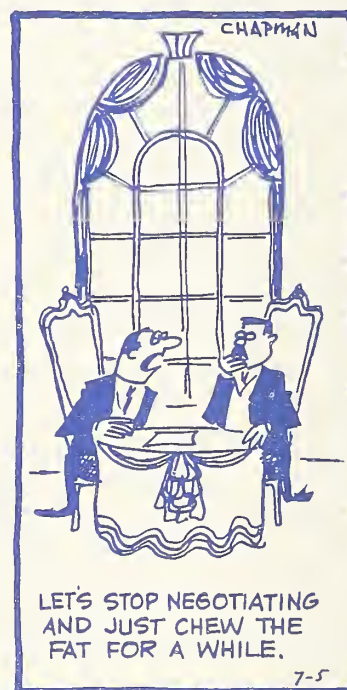
2. Q: An employee in my unit has been elected as a delegate to the annual area conference of XYZ Union. May I authorize him to go on official time?

A: No. It is required that the internal business of employee organizations be done on the time of the employees involved.

3. Q: The XYZ Local has a monthly luncheon meeting which runs from 12:00 Noon to 1:30 p.m. The program usually consists of a talk by some official about the work of his division, a film on an educational or cultural subject, or something of that sort. There are generally announcements about affairs of the Local. The head of the office has approved it so I suppose this sort of meeting is all right. But my question is this: What about letting all the people in my unit who are members go at one time?

A: As you describe it, and since the head of the office has approved it, the meeting is all right and employees who can be spared from their work may attend without charge to annual leave. You still have your personal responsibility as a supervisor for

getting out the work, however. How many employees can you spare at one time? If you have a real problem, why don't you and your boss talk with officers of the Local about it? Be as liberal as possible and as strict as necessary. If your policy doesn't seem fair to the employees involved, you may have a morale problem on your hands. If you can agree on a policy with the officers of the Local, they will help sell it to the members.



4. Q: The representative of a National Union came to see me the other day about having a meeting with my employees so that he could tell them about the program of his union and the advantages of membership. What should I do?

A: Contact your personnel officer or administrative officer. They will help you take care of the matter. See Q. 6, below.

5. Q: I am a supervisor in a unit

where exclusive recognition has been accorded the XYZ Union. Under the collective bargaining agreement, a vacation schedule has been drawn up and agreed to by management and officers of the Union. Some of the men have been beefing to me about the leave schedule. What can they do?

A: All sorts of things, most of them futile. If the plan is proper under the law and regulations, it is binding on the men whether they like it or not. Maybe those who don't like it should be put on the committee to work out the plan next year. Then see how they like their own plan.

6. Q: You said at the end of Part One of this "Tips" that as a supervisor I was not likely to be involved in defining a representation unit, extending recognition, or conducting negotiations with a union. Why?

A: Perhaps we should qualify that to say you won't get into these matters alone. You may get in as one of those concerned, but your personnel or administrative officer will most likely be in charge. If you do get involved, you will need more information than we have given here. But that, too, will be provided if and when needed.

7. Q: I have about a dozen other questions here that have---

A: Sorry, our time is up. You will have to see your personnel officer.

THE WHITE HOUSE

December 1, 1961

Statement by the President

The Task Force on Employee-Management Relations in the Federal Service which I appointed last June has submitted a report recommending a constructive, forward-looking program of employee-management relations within the Federal establishment keyed to current needs. The Task Force has done an excellent job in a difficult and complicated field.

While preserving the public interest as the paramount consideration in the administration of employee-management relations in the Federal Service and retaining appropriate management responsibilities, the Task Force recognizes the right of Federal employees and employee organizations to participate in developing improved personnel policies and working conditions. In recommending that employee organizations be consulted and that under specified conditions agreements with such organizations may be entered into, the Task Force has urged a proper course of action that should result in increased governmental efficiency as well as improved relations with Federal employees.

The report clearly recognizes that Federal employees do not have the right to strike, that both the union shop and the closed shop are inappropriate to the Federal Government, that where salaries and other conditions of employment are fixed by the Congress these matters are not subject to negotiation, and that all agreements must be consistent with merit system principles.

Additional recommendations of the Task Force call for regularizing arbitration procedures in handling individual employee grievances; extending to non-veterans appeal rights already held by veterans; requesting legislation to authorize voluntary withholding of employee organization dues by the Federal Government, at the expense of the organization; and appointment by the Secretary of Labor, when necessary, of panels of expert arbitrators to make advisory recommendations as to what constitutes appropriate units for negotiating purposes and to supervise elections by employees.

The Task Force reached its conclusions after holding public hearings in cities throughout the country, and after consulting the heads of Federal departments and agencies. Its recommendations will provide an effective system for developing improved employee-management relations. As an employer of more than 2,300,000 civilian employees, the Federal Government has long had an obligation to undertake the reappraisal which has now been made so well by the Task Force.

I have directed that an Executive order giving effect to the Task Force recommendations be prepared for issuance by the end of the year.

EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN USDA

AFGE

American Federation of Government Employees (Government-wide organization affiliated with AFL-CIO). Some 3,000 members, 66 Lodges in USDA. Recognized formally at National level by USDA.

Included in above totals is the National Joint Council of (50) Meat Inspection Lodges, AFGE, which has exclusive recognition on Nationwide basis to represent 2,500 nonprofessional Meat Inspectors, about two-thirds of whom are AFGE members.

NFFE

National Federation of Federal Employees (Government-wide, independent). Approximately 2,800 members in USDA at 150 locations. Recognized formally by USDA at National level.

OPEDA

Organization of Professional Employees, Department of Agriculture. Approximately 6,800 members engaged in professional, scientific, technical and administrative work, located in the 50 States, territories and possessions, and various foreign countries. Recognized formally at National level by USDA.

NAFV

National Association of Federal Veterinarians. Some 1,240 members of NAFV accorded exclusive recognition by USDA to represent the 2,200 professional veterinarians in USDA.* Located in the 50 States and Puerto Rico.

NASCOE

National Association of ASCS County Office Employees. Some 12,500 members represent 15,900 regular ASCS employees located in 2,945 county offices in the 50 States. Also represents the seasonal employees. Recognized exclusively at the National level by ASCS and USDA.

FTIMA

Federal Tobacco Inspectors Mutual Association, with 280 members represents 425 employees in six States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Maryland. Exclusive recognition by AMS, concurred in by Office of Personnel.

FPQINA

Federal Plant Quarantine Inspectors National Association. FPQINA has 180 members among the 509 professional inspectors located at ports of entry, land, sea, and air. Recognized formally on Nationwide basis by ARS, concurred in by OP.

Misc.

National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), National Maritime Union (NMU), and other organizations represent small groups of employees here and there in USDA.

* Final action pending

32,000 USDA EMPLOYEES REPRESENTED AS OF 2-63